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Germaniae Veteris typus

Stock#: 50997
Map Maker: Ortelius
Date: 1624
Place: Antwerp
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 19.5 x 14.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Fine Example of Ortelius' Map of the Ancient Germanic Regions

A striking Ortelius map of Northern Europe, covering Ancient Germany and the surrounding regions. This map was published in the *Parergon*, an atlas depicting the ancient world. The *Parergon* was generally published as an appendix to Ortelius' magnum opus, the *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, which is considered the first modern atlas. However, the *Parergon* was also published as a separate atlas on a few occasions, including in 1595 and 1624.

The map is oriented northward and depicts central Europe from Russia (*Sarmatiae*) in the east to the ancient region of Gaul (*Galliae pars*)—which encompassed parts of present-day France, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, and Germany—in the west. Northern Italy (*Italiae pars*) and a small part of the Adriatic Sea (*Hadriatici Sinus*) can be seen at the southern end of the map, while the North Sea (*Oceanus Germanicus*) and Denmark (*Cimbricae*) are visible in the north.

Much of the land is forested, and several mountain ranges are pictured in the center and south of the map. In addition, several large rivers are carefully rendered, including the Rhine (*Rhenus*) and the Danube (*Danubius*). These details help to orient the viewer and give a sense of the physical geography of the land. As is typical of an Ortelius map, cities are carefully drawn with clusters of buildings.

Four intricate strapwork cartouches take up space in the corners of the map. In the northwest corner, the title cartouche notes that this map by Abraham Ortelius depicts ancient Germany. The northeast corner's



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cartouche gives the year that the map was originally drawn, 1587. The cartouche in the southeast corner dedicates the map to Iacob Monavius, a friend of Ortelius. With fruits adorning it as well as a lion's head, it is particularly ornate. The final cartouche, in the southwest corner, contains a list of places whose location is uncertain. All of the cartouches make use of texture and shading, which give them a three-dimensional appearance.

Ortelius created this map using information from a number of classical scholars such as Pliny, Strabo, Ptolemy, Seneca, and Tacitus, to name a few. One example is the city of Augusta Treverorum (*Aug. Trevirorum*) located in *Germania Superior*, where Pliny the Elder held the procuratorship (governorship) of the province of Gallia Belgica, his last official position. Thus, the map is informed by the knowledge and writings of these learned individuals.

Parergon

Although best known for his world atlas, the *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, the *Parergon* was a project of personal interest and the work that Ortelius himself considered his greatest achievement. He had a deep interest in classical antiquity which spurred him to create the *Parergon* maps, and the amount of time and detail he put into each map is clearly evident. Ortelius hand drew each map of the *Parergon*, which required considerable skill and knowledge of the area's history and geography. It is considered the first historical atlas.

Parergon means supplementary and, accordingly, the first three *Parergon* maps were published as supplements to the 1579 edition of the *Theatrum*, which had already been in print for nine years. Over time, successive editions of the *Theatrum* were supplemented with more *Parergon* maps, and there are 55 known plates overall. The *Parergon* was also published as its own atlas separate from the *Theatrum* on two occasions, once in 1595 and again in 1624.

The *Parergon* was highly successful both as a supplement to the *Theatrum* and on its own. It was variously translated into French, German, Italian, and English and regularly printed until 1612. Further editions were more sporadic but still popular, such as the 1624 edition which was published twenty-six years after Ortelius' death in 1598.

This beautiful map blends geography and classical history, and the level of detail present speaks to Ortelius' skill as a mapmaker and his dedication to his craft. This would be a valuable addition to a collection of European maps or Ortelius maps, or to a collector with a strong interest in the classics.

Detailed Condition: